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Copy 2 of 3

25 April 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Project Director

SUBJECT: Military Response to HTA's R & D Program

1. You are well aware of the collective response of U.S. Military organizations to our excellent TALENT materials and their genuine satisfaction with our policy of collection and exploitation as not being for the edification of CIA but for the optimum common good of all. The purpose of this memorandum is to give some indication of the military response to the Research and Development Program at HTA aimed at creating or procuring a complete range of optical-mechanical devices to insure the maximum exploitation of many kinds of photography for intelligence, cartographic geodetic and other purposes.

2. It should first be pointed out that R & D at HTA is not conducted on a large scale. In fact, it is largely handled by [redacted] almost as a bootleg effort away from meeting operational intelligence requirements. Despite the small scale of our effort to date, we have been warmly praised by Dr. Land for having foresight to at least devote a small percentage of our effort to a continuing R & D program and he encouraged us to carry on with this at all costs and to not be completely soaked up by production.

3. From the very beginning of 1957 military and other visitors to HTA or consumers of our products expressed surprise, interest and admiration for certain items of equipment, procedure and graphic results achieved. We shared our R & D with all comers from the beginning as another facet of your general policy of service for the optimum common good of all. In mid-57, representatives from SAC came to HTA for briefings and later stated that we seemed to have the most advanced look in R & D for exploitation equipment. We were asked to come to SAC to brief their key personnel and following this SAC asked if they could tie on to the ends of our CIA contracts in order to obtain the same items of equipment we were getting and as soon as possible. This was agreed to [redacted] where DD/P-TSS is now handling our contract requirements. Yesterday Lt. Col. Condin USAF-SAC, called to say that Maj. Gen. Walsh told him that he had been reluctant at first to support this SAC move but that he now feels it was a good one and that SAC is probably 1½ years ahead of where it otherwise would have been with its R & D Program for items in the Photo Interpretation, Photogrammetry and Phototechnology fields.

Copy 2 of 5

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4. The other services or service field commands responded more slowly but now they are being heard.

25X1

U.S. Army is talking of spending [redacted] on our R & D items and many times more than this if it secures new building floor space at AMS. Air Force Headquarters requirements for our R & D items are being procured through the SAC contracts. However, other Air Force commands such as the Aeronautical Chart and Information Center at St. Louis are studying HTA R & D items as they prepare to extend their uses of TALENT materials into the geodesy, charting and technical intelligence fields.

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6. Foregoing is the general overall response to the R & D Program at HTA. No attempt has been made here to set down the names of the many subordinate commands who are expressing interest and need for single items of R & D equipment. The net effect of our indoctrination of military sources is a growing awareness on their part that resolution quality gained in the air can be just as quickly lost on the ground through improper processing, enlarging, etc. Further, the cost and risk required to gather TALENT materials makes it plainly clear that anything which we can do on the ground to increase the scope and efficiency of our exploitation of this material is very much in order. It is my opinion that the whole frontier of exploitation technology has moved forward several years to at least keep in sight of the breakthrough in collection technology which you have lead. I feel that the military services and others as well appreciate the collective contribution which is being made by CIA to the common good of all.

ARTHUR C. LUNDAHL
Chief, HTA

Distribution:

1 - Project Director

2 - Mr. Reber

3 - [redacted]

4 - Mr. of Operations

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5 - HTA/OC